

REMARKS

This application contains claims 41-83. Claims 41-82 were previously presented. New claim 83 is hereby added. No new matter has been introduced. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 41, 42, 45, 46, 49, 50-53, 55-60, 64-69, 71, 73-77, 79, 81 and 82 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Glaser (U.S. Patent No. 6,392,671) in view of Winamp (specifically, Winamp "Skin Making Tutorial v0.01," identified by the Examiner as pages 15-16). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 41 recites a method for creating a GUI for a computer application, in which user interface objects and user interface elements corresponding to the user interface objects are defined in a GUI layer that is separate from the computer application. A mapping is arbitrarily defined between the user interface objects and respective locations in a user interface screen. The user interface screen is generated with the user interface elements in the respective locations determined by the mapping, independently of the computer application.

Glaser describes a computer pointing device that includes a unique identifier, so that a graphical user interface (GUI) of the computer is automatically changed in accordance with the identifier (abstract). Features of the GUI that may be changed include the background image, color scheme, cursor shape, wall paper design, sound association, button shape and control bar color, content, design or lack thereof (col. 3, lines 19-22). As noted by the Examiner, however, Glaser fails to teach that the locations of the user interface elements may be defined independently of the computer application.

"Winamp skins are alternative interfaces for Winamp" (page 14). To create the skin, the user installs the Base 2.01 Skin, which serves as a template for the skin that the user is to make (page 15, item #2 and paragraph 3). The user can change a cursor in the skin using a .cur file (paragraphs 3-4); can change the "look" of the Playlist Editor, Graphical Equalizer and individual controls by editing .bmp files (paragraph 5); and can change fonts, colors and transparency of certain regions using .txt files (paragraph 6, continuing through page 16).

Nowhere does Winamp teach or even suggest that the skin designer can arbitrarily define any sort of mapping or do anything to determine the locations of user interface elements. On the contrary, the user is tied to the Base skin, which serves as the template and thus rigidly defines the locations of the controls. These locations are tied to and determined by the underlying Winamp audio player application. The skin must line up geometrically with the underlying functional user interface elements of the template, which the user cannot change. Applicant pointed out this specific limitation of Winamp in the Background section of the present patent application (page 1, lines 21-25).

The only reasoning given by the Examiner in support of his contention that “Winamp teaches defining a mapping between user interface object and respective location in a user interface... independent of the computer application” is that the Winamp “skin is specific for an audio media application [and] therefore independent of the computer application.” This very statement appears to be a contradiction in terms. The Examiner is correct in asserting that the Winamp skin is specific for the Winamp application. But how can a skin be simultaneously specific for and independent of the same application? Even if this apparent contradiction were resolved, however, there is still no teaching or suggestion in Winamp that the locations of the user interface elements in the skin could possibly be determined by a mapping that is independent of the Winamp application.

Therefore, claim 41 is believed to be patentable over Glaser. In view of the patentability of claim 41, claims 42, 45, 46, 49, 50-53, 55-60 and 64-67, which depend from claim 41, are also believed to be patentable.

Independent claims 68 and 76, respectively, recite a computer software product and apparatus, which operate on principles similar to the method of claim 41. These claims are therefore believed to be patentable for the reasons stated above. In view of the patentability of claims 68 and 76, claims 69, 71, 73-75, 77, 79, 81 and 82, which depend from claim 68 or claim 76, are believed to be patentable, as well.

Dependent claims 43, 44, 48, 61, 70, 72 and 78 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Glaser in view of Winamp, and further in view of Craycroft et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,731,310), Kanevsky et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,300,947), or Buxton et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,118,427). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections. In

view of the patentability of independent claims 41, 68 and 76, from which these claim depend, claims 43, 44, 48, 61, 70, 72 and 78 are also believed to be patentable.

Furthermore, notwithstanding the patentability of the independent claims, the dependent claims in this application are believed to recite independently-patentable subject matter. For the sake of brevity, however, Applicant has refrained from arguing the specific merits of the dependent claims in these remarks.

Claims 62, 63 and 80 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Glaser in view of Winamp, and further in view of Hochstedler et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,707,476). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. Hochstedler was filed July 5, 2000. On the other hand, the present patent application was filed in the national phase of PCT Patent Application No. PCT/IL00/00744, filed November 13, 2000, which claims priority from Israel Patent Application No. 132,929, filed November 14, 1999, prior to the filing date of Hochstedler. Therefore, Hochstedler is ineffective as prior art against the present patent application, and the rejection of claims 62, 63 and 80 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) should be withdrawn. Although Applicant pointed out this shortcoming of Hochstedler in response to the previous Official Action in this case, the Examiner ignored this point in the present Official Action without giving any reason. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner take note of and respond to this point.

Claim 47 was objected to for depending from a rejected base claim but was deemed to recite allowable subject matter. In view of the patentability of independent claim 41, as explained above, Applicant respectfully submits that this objection should be withdrawn.

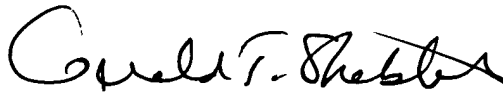
Applicant has added new claim 83 in order to recite in independent form the subject matter of claim 47 that the Examiner found to be allowable. The new claim incorporates elements of claims 41, 42 and 47, and in particular includes the step of “changing the location of the user interface element in the user interface screen by changing the position of the one of the features in the image.” The Examiner stated that this element is not disclosed by the prior art individually or in combination. Therefore, new claim 83 is believed to be patentable.

Applicant believes the amendments and remarks stated above to be fully responsive to all of the objections and grounds of rejection raised by the Examiner. In view of these amendments and remarks, all of the claims now pending in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Prompt notice to this effect is respectfully requested.

Applicant hereby requests reconsideration and reexamination thereof.

With the above amendments and remarks, this application is considered ready for allowance and Applicant earnestly solicits an early notice of same. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of the subject application, he is respectfully requested to call the undersigned at the below-listed number.

Respectfully submitted,
WELSH & KATZ, LTD.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gerald T. Shekleton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gerald" being the most prominent part.

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